VLR-4/20/94 NRHP-7/29/94

NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and marrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 16-900a). Use a type uniter, word processor, or compute the all tierns.

or compact, to compact an items.
1. Name of Property
historic name _Townfield
other names/site number _Robert Gilchrist House, DHR 284-15
2. Location
street & number Water St not for publication N/A city or town Port Royal vicinity N/A state Virginia code VA county Caroline code 033 zip code 22535
3. State/Federal Agency Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of Certifying official Date 20 June 1994
Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources State or Federal agency and bureau In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau
I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Townfield	Caroline	County,	Virginia
5. Classification			
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) _x_ private public-local public-State public-Federal			
Category of Property (Check only one box) _x_ building(s) district site structure object			
Number of Resources within Property			
Contributing Noncontributing	the Natio	na l	
Register1_	the Natio	IIdI	
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" a multiple property listing.)	if proper	ty is not	: part of
6. Function or Use			
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwe DOMESTIC Secondary FUNERARY Cemetery			
Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwe secondary	elling		-

cemetery

FUNERARY

7. Descr	:iption
C	ctural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) COLONIAL: Georgian EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal
fe re	ls (Enter categories from instructions) foundation BRICK roof WOOD: shingle valls WOOD: weatherboard
01	other
	ve Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the propert or more continuation sheets.)
8. Stater	ment of Significance
Dokes for the Register Listil A Property is a four histo * B Property is * C Property or represent or represent	a associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns C a birthplace or a grave. is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction tents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant mouthly and the properties of the construction tents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant mouthly and the properties of the complete of the properties of the complete of the complete of the properties of the complete of the properties of the propertie
D Property be	has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. G less than 50 years of age or schieved significance within the past 50 years.
Areas of	Significance (Enter categories from instructions) Architecture Politics/Government
Period of	f Significance c. 1740-1857
Significa	ant Dates c. 1740_ 1790 1857
Significa	ant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) Robert Gilchrist
Cultural	Affiliation _N/A
Architect	t/Builder unknown
Narrative one or mo	e Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one continuation sheets.)

PRESENTATION DE LA CONTRE DEL CONTRE DE LA CONTRE DEL CONTRE DE LA CONTRE DEL CONTRE DEL CONTRE DE LA CONTRE DE LA CONTRE DE LA CONTRE DEL CONTRE DE LA CONTRE DEL CONTRE DE LA CONTRE DE L
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)
Previous documentation on file (NPS)
======================================
Acreage of Property 5.9 acres_
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
1 18 308300 4226730 2
3 4
See continuation sheet.
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)
11. Form Prepared By
name/title_Deidre McCarthy
organization Mary Washington Collegedate September 1993
street & number_2432 Riviera Drtelephone_703-938-4096
city or town_Vienna state VA zip code 22181

Townfield Caroline County, Virgini
additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form: Continuation Sheets
Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)
:=====================================

(Complete	this	item	at	the	request	of	the	SHPO	or	FPO.)

name_Alexander and Nancy Long_______ telephone_804-742-5612_____

city or town_Port Royal_____ state _VA_ zip code _22535____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to thus request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

catimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form.

Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. 8cx 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Townfield Caroline County, Virginia

Summary Description

Townfield, a weatherboarded frame dwelling, is located on lot eight at the edge of Port Royal, Virginia, and has been previously listed on the National Register within the Port Royal Historic District. Laid out in a modified L-shape plan along the Rappahannock River, the horizontal axis faces the river to the north. The original section is a one-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed, Georgian central-passage-plan dwelling, to which a dining room and a projecting pavilion were added. A two-story, gable-roofed, Federal hall-and-parlor-plan addition, constructed at a right angle to the dining room, forms the stem of the L plan. A one-story, shed-roofed, kitchen extension was added to the dining room. The dwelling is surrounded on three sides by fields, and a small creek to the northeast. A family cemetery, containing at least five graves, and the remains of a servants' quarters are contributing sites. There is a contributing shed and a noncontributing cement silo.

Architectural Analysis

The original one-and-one-half-story, central-passage-plan block, with exterior end chimneys, rests on a common-bond brick foundation, forming the northwest wing of the house. All of the elevations have beaded weatherboard, and a modillioned box cornice terminates each gable. The first-floor, nine-over-nine, double-hung sash windows are symmetrical to the interior. There are seven bays on the north facade, with one wooden double-leaf door, and four on the south, one of which is a double-leaf wooden door, and three are French doors. Seven gable dormers, three facing north, light the half story above. All of the dormer windows, except one four-light window, and one six-light casement window, are six-over-nine, double-hung sash. On the gable end, two six-over-six, double-hung sash windows, on both floors, flank the massive double-shouldered chimney.

The parlor, the western room of the original block, has the most elaborate detailing. A beaded baseboard, a wide chair rail with semi-circular cymas separated by fillets, and an elaborate denticulated crown molding decorate the wall surfaces. The paneled overmantel has four crossettes with sunbursts at each corner. Diamond and Greek key patterns are carved into the mantelpiece cornice, which also has a simple vine pattern and a central sunburst in the frieze. Reeded pilasters support the mantelpiece and continue above it to the crown molding. Door and window surrounds are finished with moldings of semicircular cymas and fillets. These details are also used in the central passage.

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A winder stair rises from the passage, through the eastern room, to the second floor. A large fireplace, now bricked in and plastered over, once heated this space. Inside a closet, created when the exterior end chimney was enclosed by the dining room addition, the original beaded weatherboard is visible, as well as a small warming oven in the chimney.

A secondary passage leads off the southern end of the central passage, toward the dining room. It is separated from the eastern room by a thin curtain wall containing two six-over-six, double-hung sash windows and a door. Two of the French doors on the southern facade light this area. The door and window surrounds, as well as the chair rail in the passage, like those in the eastern room, are elliptical in profile, indicating a later remodeling.

In the half story of the original block, the same room configuration is utilized, with beaded baseboard and minimal decorative moldings on door and window surrounds throughout. Above the parlor, a plain fireplace surround supports a mantelpiece with a Greek key design in the cornice. The winder stair, with a molded chair rail like the central passage, rises to meet the passage. A chamber, above the eastern room, completes the original unit. A plain board fireplace surround and mantelpiece frame the fireplace in this room.

In 1823, a cross-gabled pavilion, with a double-leaf door and six windows, was added to the northern elevation of the central passage. The original plate, onto which the pavilion was added, protrudes into the central passage, now decorated. A dining room, also added in 1823, extends to the east, enclosing the gable end chimney.

Flush with the Georgian elevation, the dining room adds four more bays to the north facade, and one to the south, as well as two gable dormers, all of which have the same windows as the original structure. On the eastern elevation, a fixed-sash window on the first floor lights a servants' passage cut out of the dining room space at a later time. A six-over-six, double-hung sash window also pierces the gable end on the second floor. The floorboards of the room were replaced in the late nineteenth century due to fire; however, the original beaded baseboard and torus chair rail remain. Door and window surrounds are like those in the eastern room and secondary passage of the original block, although there is no overmantel above the paneled mantelpiece which is supported by fluted pilasters. The chamber above the dining room has plain door and window surrounds, as well as a fireplace without a mantelpiece.

In 1857, the two-story, Federal-style, hall-and-parlor-plan addition, resting on a common-bond brick foundation, was constructed, creating the stem to the L-shaped plan. The symmetrical western facade has three bays, with a centrally located door on each floor. The

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eastern elevation has four bays and a central door. Two windows flank the exterior chimney on the southern gable end. All the windows on the first floor are nine-over-nine, double-hung sash, with six-over-nine on the second floor. Exterior entrances have paneled doors and rectangular transoms with elliptical tracery; however, the principal entrance is elaborated with sidelights and tracery.

Throughout the two rooms in the Federal wing, elaborate fluted door and window surrounds appear, with paterae in the corner blocks. A grand, open-string, double-run staircase, opposite the western door, dominates the hall, which is decorated with the same beaded baseboard and chair rail as the dining room, continuing without the chair rail into the parlor. The fireplace surround, similar to the dining room, does not have a paneled frieze.

In the second story, a passage, with a flat chair rail and beaded baseboard, begins in the chamber above the dining room and leads to a chamber above the parlor which has the same fireplace surround as below. A parallel passage leads from the chamber back to a dressing room, above the stair passage.

The one-story, one-room kitchen wing was added in the early twentieth century off of the east side of the L-plan. Set back from the northern facade under a gable roof, the north elevation has three bays, and the south, two. In the mid-twentieth century, a shed-roofed extension was added to the kitchen wing, covering a carport and creating two rooms with a small chimney.

Four concrete porches, with decorative wooden railings, are positioned on the exterior. On the north facade, outside the pavilion, decorated with a modillion cornice and pedimented gable, is a small stoop. On the southern side of the central passage there is a larger patio with inset steps. The western Federal entrance has a stoop covered with a flat, balustraded roof supported by two square posts and two fluted pilasters. A stoop on the north elevation of the kitchen is also covered with a shed roof, supported by two square posts. A bulkhead entrance to the dirt-floored basement below the Georgian wing is covered with a low, flat, shingled roof, on the north facade. Another bulkhead entrance leads to the dirt-floored basement below the Federal wing.

Bathrooms were added to the house in the early twentieth century. The northeast corners of both floors in the Federal wing were reserved for this function, as well as the southeast corner of the dining room on the second floor. One bathroom was placed above the central passage of the original block.

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A well with a concrete base and metal wellhead, now completely filled in, is located off the northeast corner of the building. West of the well, a chimney rises from the contributing servant quarters site. North of the chimney is a small, one-story, frame and clapboard contributing shed, with a pyramidal roof and batten-board door. Southeast from the house is a graveyard containing five gravestones. Northeast from the house is a large, noncontributing cement silo.

The entire structure has been recently renovated to return each section to its historical appearance. The original materials have been reused as much as possible, including bracing original structural timbers with steel I-beams. Deterioration continues, however, in the foundation and the exterior weatherboards, as well as the roof.

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Townfield Caroline County, Virginia

Statement of Significance

Townfield, located in Port Royal, on the Rappahannock River, is a good example of an evolutionary house, showing changing trends in building styles. The original block, built in the mid-eighteenth century, displays high-style Georgian attributes. An 1823 addition, and another 1857 addition, both are designed in the Federal style.

The first owner of Townfield, Robert Gilchrist, was a prominent member of the Port Royal community, maintaining his residence in the house until his death in 1790. First appearing in the Caroline County court records in 1747, he became a trustee of Port Royal, as well as a Caroline County justice of the peace, sheriff, and finally a Caroline County representative to the House of Delegates. In 1755, Gilchrist helped to obtain a charter from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, to establish the Kilwinning Port Royal Crosse Lodge, the second Masonic lodge in Virginia. A wealthy merchant and shipowner, Robert Gilchrist served his community, from his home at Townfield, for his entire life.

Historical Background

Encompassing four town lots at the edge of Port Royal, Townfield overlooks the Rappahannock River to the northeast. Centrally located on lot eight, the dwelling is surrounded by fields and bordered by Water Street to the west. The original one-and one-half-story, central-passage plan block may have been built between 1740 and 1747. At age 18 or 19 in 1740, Gilchrist could have obtained his own land, and begun to create his own fortune, however, by 1747 he appears in court records as an established citizen of Port Royal. The fine detailing, such as the parlor overmantel and cornice, support an early date and indicate that the owner was a wealthy person, in a position such as Gilchrist.

Employed as a merchant and a businessman, Gilchrist dealt primarily with tobacco, but also in other marketable goods. As early as 1752, he offered 1300 pounds sterling worth of European goods for sale.² Throughout 1768 to 1775, he advertised other goods, such as 200 hogsheads of tobacco in 1772.³ Aside from selling commodities, Gilchrist made money in land speculation, selling 1,033 acres with a mill in 1772.⁴ Clearly a well-respected citizen, Gilchrist was appointed guardian to many children by the Caroline County Court, and many of his neighbors appointed him executor of their wills.

Some of the more lucrative positions Gilchrist held were in the government of his county. Appointed a Caroline County justice of the peace in May 1751, he served until his death, except

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while a sheriff and a delegate.⁵ In February 1752 he was named a trustee of Port Royal and charged with selling off sixty acres of the town.⁶ He took the oath as sheriff of Caroline County in August 1759, and finally was elected to represent the county to the House of Delegates in 1781.⁷ Along with these official positions, he was also appointed a commissioner by the court for other duties, such as supervising the construction of a new county courthouse in January 1760.⁸

As a prominent community figure, he was successful in helping to found the second oldest Masonic lodge in Virginia. The Grand Lodge of Scotland, in Edinburgh, chartered the Kilwinning Port Royal Crosse Lodge in 1755, mentioning Robert Gilchrist, John Gray, James Miller, and John Crosse. Gilchrist was named the Senior Warden for the lodge in 1755 as well. Ranked second only to Norfolk, the lodge remained active until 1859.9

Gilchrist married Catherine Miller, who died at the age of 51 in 1769. Robert Gilchrist, who died in 1790, and Catherine are buried at Townfield, on lot 22. Because they had no children, the estate passed to Gilchrist's nephew, James Robb, in 1791. At his death in 1805, James Robb willed Townfield to his wife, Lucy Warring Robb. In 1810, their son, Robert Robb, sold to Philip Lightfoot, "that tract or parcel of land, adjoining the town of Port Royal, where on the said Robert Robb lately resided, and which was formerly the property of Robert Gilchrist, now deceased, including the Houses and Gardens, and that fronting the dwelling house door." 12

The original structure remain unchanged until 1823, when Philip Lightfoot added a dining room to the eastern end of the house, and a projecting pavilion to the central passage.¹³ Attempting to maintain the continuity of the structure, some design elements are repeated; however, the original hall portion was remodeled with newer molding, elliptical in profile, to match the addition. A gradual transition to a more popular style is indicated in the additions where elements of both Georgian and Federal detailing are incorporated.

Lightfoot also added the two-story, three-bay, hall-and-parlor-plan Federal wing on the south elevation. Typical Federal detailing elements occur throughout this block, such as transoms and sidelights with elliptical tracery. Some Greek Revival elements appear as well, such as corner blocks with paterae on all door surrounds, indicating the waning popularity of the Federal style, as classical revivals began to take prominence.

Sally S. Lightfoot, Philip's wife, died in 1859 and was buried on lot 22, followed by Philip Lightfoot in 1865. John B. Lightfoot, their son, received the house, selling it to Laura

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S. Thornton in 1872.¹⁵ Between 1900, when Thornton sold the property, and 1933 when it was bought by Constantine Brown, Townfield exchanged hands numerous times between the Pratt and Marshall families.¹⁶ During this period, the kitchen addition was constructed. Ethel Wheeler, Constantine Brown's wife, was buried with the Lightfoots in 1939, and in 1940, B. I. Driscoll purchased the property.¹⁷ Ivor and Margaret Comman took possession in 1969.¹⁸

The current owners, Alexander and Nancy Long, bought the property in 1982.¹⁹ The house remains in good condition, and despite recent repairs and the addition of structural bracing, the integrity remains intact, with all of the original woodwork, floorboards, and details.

Endnotes

- 1. Caroline County Order Book 1747, p. 15. Gilchrist must have constructed the house between the time he reached majority and when he began to enter court records as an established citizen.
- 2. Virginia Gazette (Williamsburg), 12 October 1752.
- 3. Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon: Williamsburg), 17 September 1772.
- 4. Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon: Williamsburg), 13 August 1772.
- 5. Caroline County Order Book 1751, p. 255.
- 6. William Waller Hening, <u>The Statues at Large: A collection of all the Laws of Virginia</u> (Richmond: Franklin Press, 1819), vol. 6, p. 318.
- 7. Caroline County Order Book 1759, p. 80, Virginia Historical Society, Virginia Magazine of History and Biography (Richmond: House of the Society, 1903), vol. 5, p. 217.
- 8. Caroline County Order Book 1760, p. 93.
- 9. Marshall Wingfield, <u>A History of Caroline County</u>, Virginia (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1969), p. 87-110.
- 10. Virginia Historical Society, <u>Virginia Magazine of History and Biography</u> (Richmond: House of the Society, 1903), vol. 10, p. 101.
- 11. Caroline County Wills and Platts 1742-1830, (Virginia State Library and Archives, microfilm reel 7), 1805.

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- 12. Minor Family Papers 1657-1942 (Virginia Historical Society, microfilm), section 16, 3 January 1810.
- 13. Mutual Assurance Society fire insurance policies, v. 4 no. 146, v. 71 no. 2093, v. 84 no. 5336, Caroline County Land Tax Records, 1823.
- 14. Caroline County Land Tax Records, 1857.
- 15. Caroline County Deed Book, 55, p. 130.
- 16. Caroline County Deed Book, 68, 79, 89, 103.
- 17. Caroline County Deed Book, 113, p. 151.
- 18. Caroline County Deed Book, 173, p. 333.
- 19. Caroline County Deed Book, 269, p. 164.

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Caroline County Deed Books. 55 p. 130, 68 p. 88-93, 79 p. 215-216, 89 p. 41, 103 p. 42-43, 113 p. 151, 269 p. 161-164, 282 p. 617, 308 p. 208.

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Fall, Ralph Emmett. <u>Hidden Village: Port Royal, Virginia 1744-1981</u>. Verona, VA: McClure Printing Co., Inc., 1982.

Hardy, Stella Pickett. Colonial Families of the Southern States of America. New York: Tobias A. Wright, 1911, p. 339-340.

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Minor Family Papers 1657-1942. Virginia Historical Society. microfilm, section 16.

Mutual Assurance Society Fire Insurance Policies. v. 4 no. 146, v. 71 no. 2093, v. 84 no. 5336, v. 98 no. 9452, v. 108 no. 12522, v. 118 no 15583, v. 130 no. 19094.

Swen, E.G. Virginia Historical Index vol. 1. Roanoke, VA: Stone Printing and Manufacturing Co., 1934, p. 763.

Torrence, Clayton. Virginia Wills and Administrations 1632-1800. Richmond: William Byrd Press, 1930, p. 169.

Virginia Historical Society. <u>Virginia Magazine of History and Biography.</u> vol. 5 p. 217, vol. 10 p. 101. Richmond: House of the Society, 1903.

Wingfield, Marshall. A History of Caroline County, Virginia. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1969.

Works Progress Administration Historical Inventory. vol. 3. p. 245

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property, encompassing a total of 5.3 acres, consists of lot 2, lot 3, and the half of lot 1 directly adjacent to lot 2, as described in Caroline County Deed Book 269, page 164 and shown on the May 24, 1977 plat map entered into Caroline County Deed Book 268, page 461.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the house, its outbuildings, and the cemetery historically associated with Townfield. The parcel includes Port Royal's original lot 8 and portions of lot 22, which were among Robert Gilchrist's first land purchases in Port Royal, however it excludes Gilchrist's extensive land holdings outside of the town of Port Royal.

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Townfield Caroline County, Virginia

Photographs

Townfield, Caroline County DHR 284-15

CREDIT: Deidre McCarthy DATE: April 1993

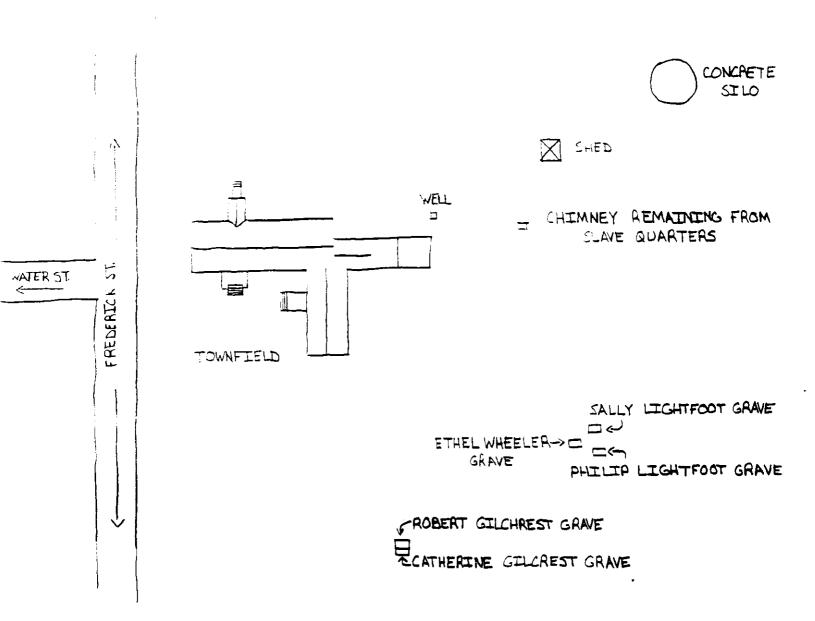
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library and Archives, VDHR Neg. No. 13632

- 1. VIEW OF: north facade, camera facing southeast PHOTO 1 of 19
- 2. VIEW OF: north facade, camera facing south PHOTO 2 of 19
- 3. VIEW OF: south elevation of original block and west elevation of Federal wing, camera facing east

PHOTO 3 of 19

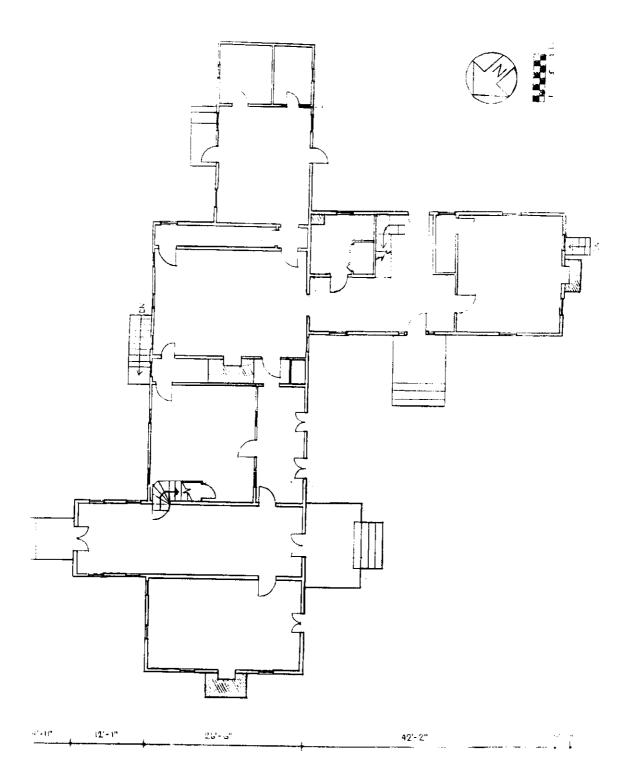
- 4. VIEW OF: west elevation of Federal wing, camera facing east PHOTO 4 of 19
- 5. VIEW OF: south elevation of the original block, camera facing north PHOTO 5 of 19
- 6. VIEW OF: south and east elevations of Federal wing, camera facing north PHOTO 6 of 19
- 7. VIEW OF: east elevation of Federal wing, camera facing west PHOTO 7 of 19
- 8. VIEW OF: north elevation, camera facing southwest
 PHOTO 8 of 19
- 9. VIEW OF: overmantel of original parlor, camera facing north
 PHOTO 9 of 19
- 10. VIEW OF: overmantel of original parlor, camera facing north PHOTO 10 of 19

- 11. VIEW OF: central passage of original block, camera facing northeast PHOTO 11 of 19
- 12. VIEW OF: mantel of dining room addition, camera facing north
 PHOTO 12 of 19
- 13. VIEW OF: first floor mantel of Federal wing, camera facing south PHOTO 13 of 19
- 14. VIEW OF: Federal wing entrance, camera facing west
 PHOTO 14 if 19
- VIEW OF: Federal wing entrance, camera facing east
 PHOTO 15 of 19
- 16. VIEW OF: chimney on servants quarter site, camera facing north PHOTO 16 of 19
- 17. VIEW OF: frame shed, camera facing east PHOTO 17 of 19
- 18. VIEW OF: gravestone of Catherine Gilchrist PHOTO 18 of 19
- VIEW OF: gravestone of Robert Gilchrist PHOTO 19 of 19



TOWNFIELD
WATER STREET, PORT ROYAL, VIRGINIA
DHR 284-65

NOT TO SCALE



TOWNFIELD
CAROLINE COUNTY, VA

